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The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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OUR CALVARY.

God draws a cloud over each gleaming morn:
Would we ask why?
It is because all noblest things are born
In agony.

Only upon *some* cross of pain or woe
God's son may lie;
Each soul redeemed from self and sin must know
Its Calvary.

Yet we must crave neither for joy nor grief,
God chooses best:
He only knows our sick soul's best relief,
And gives us rest.

More than our feeble hearts can ever pine
For holiness,
The Father, in His tenderness divine,
Yearneth to bless.

He never sends a joy not meant in love,
Still less a pain:
Our gratitude the sunlight falls to prove;
Our faith the rain.

In His hands we are safe. We falter on
Through storm and mire:
Above, beside, around us, there is One
Will never tire.

What though we fall, and bruised and wounded lie,
Our lips in dust?
God's arm shall lift us up to victory:
In Him we trust.

For neither life, nor death, nor things below,
Nor things above,
Shall ever sever us, that we should go
From His great love.

—*Frances Power Cobbe.*

GRATITUDE.

"*And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?*"—LUKE xvii. 17.

The main interest of this story centres around this saying of Christ's and its meaning, "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?" They have been usually taken to mean a rebuke to ingratitude, or the expression of Christ's surprise at a Samaritan's gratitude. But the first is wholly improbable, for he was not one to require gratitude, and the second is quite unlike Jesus. He would not be astonished at un-Jewish gratitude.

No, the interest of the phrase is in this, that it was, as it seems to me, the rapid, half-unconscious expression of Christ's surprise, that *all* did not return to thank him. He expected the ten to come back. Only one returned, and almost in soliloquy the words came, the unpremeditated expression of his natural expectation: "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine? There are not returned to give glory to God save this stranger." Two things are contained in that view of the word, the susceptibility of Jesus to gratitude, and his natural expectation of good from men.

The first is here my subject. We should naturally infer his susceptibility to gratitude from the fact that he was a loving and true man. For in proportion as a man delights in doing things worthy of gratitude does he delight to receive gratitude; in proportion as ingratitude is sharp to any one is gratitude dear. It is the fashion sometimes to disclaim gratitude. Distrust the man who really does that, for he has spoilt his heart. It is the habit of some to repel it, to check

its utterance. We little think how cruel that is, and how unwise. It throws back on the heart of the receiver the burden of unexpressed thanks, and that is a burden we ought to bear with others, as well as the burden of sorrow. To reject gratitude makes the grateful feel that the person who helped them did not love them, or that there was no kindness at the root of the good done; and then his gratitude becomes a pain to the giver of it, and the kindness he has received an obligation. It is unhuman, I repeat, not to be susceptible to, not to gladly receive, the thanks the heart desires to give.

On the other hand it is very ugly to claim gratitude. That also proves that we are thinking more of our own goodness in giving than of giving because we love, and it is only frank giving without any notion of recompense which deserves gratitude. There are no claims so often impertinently made as the claims for gratitude, and none which so separate people from one another—and this, because the claim is, at its root, unjust.

That was not Christ's way. He neither spoilt the good he did by rejecting gratitude nor by claiming it. He only showed, when he received it, the natural human joy he had in it, the frankest pleasure in accepting it. And this was a beautiful thing in him.

Once more, if Christ's life and character were the image of God's life, this tells us, and it is a pleasant thought that God takes delight in our thankfulness to him, that it is sweet to his fatherly ear to hear the gratitude of earth, that he listens for and "misses our little human praise." For, if we delight in gratitude, and no sweeter, purer pleasure, except that of giving, is on earth (in truth, it is correlative with that of giving), how much more must God our Father, who bends to ask for our heart, delight in it. He would not wish our love, and what is gratitude but love for love expressed, did he not enjoy it. Love loves love. Yes, when, like the woods on a spring morning, our soul is full of songs to God, with joy as natural and unconscious as the delight of birds in dew and light, or, when, in deepest sorrow, we have felt him near, as comfort, love, and strength, and our heart fills with gratitude like a sea, till sorrow itself is drowned in a higher feeling—then it adds a dearer, more mystic touch of pleasure to know that he feels our thankfulness with pleasure. It brings him near to us in that communion which has no voice, so profound is the sweetness of its rest.

And surely, however tried we have been, we have enough for which to give him thanks. His the morning brightness and the quiet of the evening which have brought so often inspiration and stillness after the wind and storm of the heart; His the woodland and the rushing water, sailing cloud and mountain wind, which have so often brought their freshness to restore our hearts; His the language of the Heavens,—the power, the thought, the image, and the silent joy with which nature has blessed our life; His, too, the love which has surrounded us from infancy, the little unremembered acts of kindness which kept the web of life bright, however dark its threads. From Him, the thoughts which made us new, the emotions which transfigured Being, the wonderful sense of life which sent us forward again, when all seemed lost, when life was a failure, and love betrayed. From Him the trials which have strengthened years, and the rapture which has made us love life dearly.

Alas, we think too much of our sins and miseries, and then our heart grows hard. Turn now and again and think how much you have enjoyed,—how many good, pure things have been yours; how, if there have been sharp intervals of grief and pain, there has, on the whole, been a continuousness of good and pleasant things which, like a stream by the path, have companied our way,—and be like the traveller, when he stays to think of his companion whose music has made the undertone of all his walk, and sent its voice to flow through all his thoughts—grateful to the Lord of Love.

It is good to live in this grateful atmosphere, for the heart wins the habit of gratitude. We are ready, then, to feel it for all the little kindnesses, and the daily touches of gentleness and tenderness, of which we too often take such careless heed. We lose so much when we are not of thankful mood; we miss the scent and beauty of a thousand wayside flowers of love, when we are not attentive to give thanks or to feel thanks. We miss so much of the power of making others more at ease, more happy in society, when we are not quick to be grateful.

And lastly of that noble courtesy which makes true gentlehood, the finest grace is sensitiveness towards gratitude. There are few things which bless and soothe the life of others more, or do them more good than the giving of thanks. It makes men feel that they are some use in the world, and that is one of the finest impulses to a better life. It cheers many a wearied heart with pleasant hope, and bids many a man who is sad in mood take courage. It is the soother of the world, and, like mercy, its work is twofold, for it blesses him who gives it and receives it.

We give much blame, and it may be well. Let us give a little more gratitude, and it will be better for the world. For the world wants kindness far more than harshness. It is very sore with many sorrows, many blows, and we know not how much good a tender voice and soft hand may do. We have so short a time to live, let us feel and give all the gratitude we can. We shall never regret that in the world beyond, where God is grateful to all who have been kind to his children here.

To omit gratitude is to do harm to the giver of good things; to give it is to do him good, however great he be. The nine went away, and gave no thanks, chilled the heart of Christ, and made his work more sorrowful; but he who returned healed the wound the nine had given, and redeemed their failure; for in his thankfulness he gave back to Christ his cheerfulness, and the Saviour's day was brighter till the evening. It was much to do that, and the doer knew not what he did.—*Stopford A. Brooke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom
Lead Thou me on:
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Shouldst lead me on;
I loved to choose and see my path; but now
Lead Thou me on.
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.

So long thy power hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

—*John Henry Newman.*

God gives us always strength enough and sense enough for what he wants us to do. If we either tire ourselves or puzzle ourselves, it is our own fault. And we may always be sure, whatever we are doing, that we cannot be pleasing him if we are not happy ourselves.—*J. Ruskin.*

As we come to know ourselves through and through, we come to see ourselves more as God sees us, and then we catch some little glimpse of his designs with us, how each ordering of his Providence, each check to our desires, each failure of our hopes, is just fitted for us.—*E. B. Pusey.*

Nothing is intolerable that is necessary. Now God hath bound thy troubles upon thee with a design to try thee, and with purposes to reward and crown thee. These cords thou canst not break, and therefore lie thou down gently, and suffer the hand of God to do what he please.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

High hearts are never long without hearing some new call, some distant clarion of God, even in their dreams; and soon they are observed to break up the camp of ease, and start on some fresh march of faithful service.—*J. Martineau.*

Surely, none are so full of cares or so poor in gifts that to them also, waiting patiently and trustfully on God for his daily commands, he will not give direct ministry for him, increasing according to their strength and their desire.—*Elizabeth Charles.*

We never miss an opportunity of giving innocent pleasure, or of helping another soul on the path to God, but we are taking away from ourselves forever what might have been a happy memory, and leaving in its place a remorse.—*Frances Power Cobbe.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

OFFERS.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass., offers to ministers "The Christian Doctrine of Prayer," by James Freeman Clarke, and also the following sermons and essays in leaflet form, by the same author: "The Meaning of the Epistle to the Romans," "Explanation of the Introduction to John," "Reasons for Believing in a Future Life," "Many Man-

sions in God's House," "The Meaning and Importance of the Resurrection," "The Mutual Obligations of Science and Religion," "The Genuine Prayer."

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. For some years I lost track of the *Cheerful Letter* and the good people who carry on the work, but a few days ago I began a hunt for you all again, and so here I am, and a hearty "How do you do?" goes with this. Please tell my friends we are still doing our best for school in Oklahoma. I have been teaching here for years, and now have a grown daughter who is just going at it. We hope some friend has some pictures and picture-books, and a copy of "Black Beauty," and anything in the way of attractive, bright things to go in a brand-new county school-house. Mrs. T. J. Philpin, Muskogee, Oklahoma.

2. Mr. Warren Bunker, Clinton, Maine, R. F. D. 43, will be very glad of reading. Mr. Bunker recently lost his horse, which prevents the family getting away from home, and so asks for books or magazines to fill the lonely hours.

3. We have a nice Sunday-school, but we need two Bibles. Two families have not any, and are too poor to buy one. We would like one or two pictures to go on the wall in the Sunday-school room. I would like for myself "Curiosities of the Bible." Mrs. H. H. Foster, Nadine, New Mexico.

4. Winnie Stogsdell, Linn, Oklahoma, an orphan, asks for good reading.

5. I would like to receive "The Mistress of Shenstone," and any other good reading. I have received several books and magazines, but they have stopped, and I do not get anything. I am a cripple and a reader. Lillie M. Scogins, Arlington, Tennessee.

6. Mrs. A. C. Hottinger, Hebron, Ohio, is a helpless cripple. She would be pleased to have friends send her some books. Also cards or letters would be appreciated.

7. My address is changed from Saluda, North Carolina, to Springfield, Kentucky. I would be most grateful for any reading matter sent me here. Mrs. Alice Whittle, Springfield, Kentucky.

8. Mrs. Lelia A. Hall, Dodson, Virginia, expresses her gratitude for all that has been sent her, and asks for a red-letter Bible or any reading that we can send.

9. I want to thank all of those who sent me music and papers. I would have written personally, but some gave no name or address. I wrote to all that did. I would be glad of some good books. I especially like Mary Holmes's and E. P. Roe's books. Mrs. H. M. Gillis, Stovall, North Carolina.

10. Mr. C. B. Frazelle, Swansboro, North Carolina, who has had paralysis since March, asks for "The Evolution of Religion," by Dr. William A. Hinckle, M.D., also "Why may we believe in Life after Death?" by Charles Edward Jefferson, M.D.

11. Will you all please give me a letter party Thanksgiving Day? I am a helpless invalid, with no means of a living. My eyes are so painful I can read but little or do any work to pass the long weary day. My husband is not able to do much work. We would like a dictionary, also *Earth and Home*, a monthly magazine. Would be very glad of a stout-leafed card album for my prison work, as I want to send a book to the library at Windsor, Vermont, for a Christmas gift. Will some kind ones call on an old lady in Leominster? Her address is Miss Annie Wade, 335 Lancaster Street, Leominster, Mass. She is helpless and has no friends. Mrs. Roy Cowles, West Derby, Vermont.

12. Mr. N. E. Mullins asks for reading for himself and family, children's ages from six to thirteen. Address Mr. Mullins at Raspberry, Pope County, Arkansas.

13. The *Outlook* for 1911 is asked for by Mr. M. N. Royal, Cottage Grove, Alabama.

14. Mrs. Lillie Davis, Shiloh, New Jersey, asks for a book called "Sidney," which she will pass on after reading.

15. Miss M. M. Quesenberry, Marion, Virginia, will be grateful for "Mary Carey," "William Green Hill," "Aunt Minerva," and any of Henry Van Dyke's little books.

16. Mrs. S. A. Pace, Lancaster, Texas, R. F. D., asks for the *Ladies' Home Journal* or any current magazine.

17. The following addresses, given us by Mr. Hale, are all of persons desirous of good reading. They are mostly farmers with children, who need suitable reading, but cannot afford to buy it. Mr. Lemuel Jones, Mr. Charles Garrison, Mr. Enoch Easter, Mr. George Flanary, Mr. Howard Standridge, Dr. James Blalack, Mr. Thomas Chism, Mr. John Chron, Mr. Lon Boyd. Address all at Ben Hur, Pope County, Arkansas.

DEATHS.

It is with sorrow we record the death of Rev. C. F. Dykeman of Dakota, Minnesota, who passed out on July 13. His daughter writes: "I wish to thank you for the many happy hours which the books you sent gave to my father, for he loved books. He had many other pen friends, whom I hope to thank for kindnesses, but I must wait until some message comes, as I do not know names and addresses."

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

TEASING.

(*Continued from last number.*)

On reaching the house, the elders proceeded to five o'clock tea in the drawing-room, the juniors to *goûter* in the dining-room. As Dolores entered, she beheld a row of all her five younger cousins drawn up, looking at her as if she had committed high treason, and she was instantly addressed:

"Tell-tale tit!" began Valetta.

"Sneak!" cried Wilfred.

"I *will* call her 'Croat'!" added Fergus.

"Worse than Croat! Bashi Bazouk!" exclaimed Valetta.

"Oh, Dolores! how could you?" said Mysie.

"To get poor Willie punished!" said Val.

Dolores stood her ground. "It was time to speak when it came to shooting arrows at me."

"Hush! hush! Willie," cried Mysie. "I told you so. Now, Dolores, listen. Nobody ever tells of anybody when it is only being tiresome, and they don't mean it, or there would never be any peace at all. That's honor! Do you see? One may go to Gill sometimes."

"One's a sneak if one does," put in Wilfred; but Mysie, unheeding, went on,—

"And Gill can help without a fuss or going to mamma."

"Mamma always knows," said Val.

"Mamma knows all about everything," said Mysie. "I think it's nature; and, if she does not always take notice at the time, she will have it out sooner or later." Then, resuming the thread of her discourse: "So you see, Dolly, we have made up our minds that we will forgive you this time, because you are an only child and don't know what's what, and that's some excuse. Only you mustn't go on telling tales whenever an accident happens."

Dolores thought it was she who ought to forgive, but the force against her was overpowering, though still she hesitated. "But, if I promise not to tell," she said, "how do I know what may be done to me?"

"You might trust us," cried Mysie, with flashing eyes.

"And I can tell you," added Wilfred, "that, if you do tell, it will be ever so much worse for you, girl that you are."

"War to the knife!" cried Valetta, and everybody except Mysie joined in the outcry, "War to the knife with traitors in the camp."

Mysie managed to produce a pause, and again acted orator. "You see, Dolores, if you did tell, it would not be possible for mamma or Gill to be always looking after you, and I couldn't do you much good; and, if all these three are set against you, and are horrid to you, you'll have no peace in your life; and, after all, we only ask of you to give and take in a good-natured sort of way, and not to be always making a fuss about everything you don't like. It is the only way, I assure you."

Dolores saw the fates were against her, and said,—

"Very well."

"You promise?"

"Yes."

"Then we forgive you, and here's a box of chocolate things Aunt Ada brought. We'll have a cigar all round and be friends. Smoke the pipe of peace."—"*Two Sides of the Shield*," *C. M. Yonge.*

[This being the result of the method, can it be called successful? The editor would be glad to receive notes from mothers, giving their opinions on this subject. It will be remembered that Lady Merrifield's theory was not to punish anything that was not reported to her, and that occasional punishment and reproof "maintained the principle of obedience," although in many cases the fault was ignored.]

The deep heart of God made known and accessible to his children,—this, and nothing less than this, we touch in Jesus Christ.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE BIRD'S USEFULNESS TO US.

The ravages of birds are grossly exaggerated.—*W. Warde Fowler, "The Birds."*

We can feed our cattle, our hogs, a vagabond homeless cat, a stray dog, or a tramp; but, if a bird claims any of our bounty, capital punishment is not too severe for it. *Edward Howe Forbush, "Useful Birds and their Protection."*

While we regard birds as enemies, they naturally retaliate; but how glad they would be, ay, even the fiercest beasts, to become friendly with man! There is none among them untamable, positively not one.—*Sir Edwin Arnold, in the Youth's Companion.*

The war of extermination waged on birds is a blot on the history of American civilization. It is paralleled only by the destruction of birds for millinery purposes, which has some shockingly cruel aspects.—*Edward Howe Forbush, "Useful Birds and their Protection."*

The subject of the usefulness of the bird family to the human family, nay, of the absolute necessity of its services to our life on the earth, is too large for adequate treatment in this book.

Surely, at this late day, with the hourly experience of any one attempting to cultivate so much as a rosebush,—yes, more, of any one desiring to enjoy the fruits of the earth,—and knowing as we do from long experience that the bird is the only efficient check upon insects, surely, I say, nothing need be said of their ravages and their inconceivable multiplication. Yet a few facts from the recently published admirable work of Mr. Forbush on "Useful Birds" may give one subject for thought.

He says, "When we fully appreciate the consuming power of insects, they assume an economic importance greater than can be accorded to the ravening beast of prey."

"The number of insect species," he goes on, "is greater by far than that of the species of all other living creatures combined. More than three hundred thousand have been described. There are many thousands of undescribed species in the museums. Dr. Linter, the late distinguished State entomologist of New York, considered it not improbable that there were a million species of insects." Dr. Fitch, by careful investigation of the aphides on a cherry-tree ten feet high, found that by moderate estimate there were twelve million plant lice on that tree.

"The rapidity of propagation shown by some insects is perhaps without parallel in the animal world." The *Canadian Entomologist* states that all the transformations of the Colorado potato beetle "are effected in fifty days; so that the result of a single pair, if allowed to increase without molestation, would in one season amount to over sixty millions."

And, as to the voracity of insects, "a certain flesh-eating larva will consume in twenty-four hours two hundred times its original weight," as if in human life an infant in the first day of its life should consume fifteen hundred pounds of food.

A word as to the financial losses from insect ravages, "In 1854 the loss in New York State alone from the ravages of the insignificant wheat midge (*Diplosis tritici*), as estimated by the secretary of the New York State Agricultural Society, was fifteen million dollars."

Dr. C. L. Marlatt states that "in the year 1900 the losses in the wheat-growing States from (the Hessian fly) undoubtedly approached one hundred million dollars."

Professor C. V. Riley in 1890 stated that he had estimated some time previous to that date, "that the injury done to crops in the United States by insects exceeded three hundred million dollars annually."

These are but a very small part of the evidence produced by Mr. Forbush on this important subject. As for the fitness of the bird for keeping down these destructive armies, the one prominent fact in the equipment of the bird for the work is the enormous amount of food he can dispose of in a day. No other creature known, unless it be the insects he feeds on, requires such a prodigious amount of sustenance. For statements and statistics I refer my readers to that most instructive and valuable work from which I have taken the foregoing extracts.

In the face of these absolutely appalling figures, does it not seem a crime to allow the slaughter of our most useful helpers, which is constantly going on in our own country, from the boy with his sling or bow and arrows to the plume-hunter and the pot-hunter?

The canny little country, Switzerland, is wiser. According to Mr. Fowler, "No bird may now be killed at any time of the year, in any part of Switzerland, without either a game license, of which the cost is considerable, or permission to procure specimens for a scientific object."

Almost as bad in its results as to kill birds outright is to slander them. Several birds, simply because of a bad name fastened upon them, are considered fair game for persecution. There is the catbird, beautiful, useful to us, and a charming singer: because his call-note at a little distance resembles the mew of the cat, he has not only been named after his worst enemy, but invested in the popular mind with the vices the same unthinking notion has bestowed upon the poor cat. "I hate a catbird!" one often hears; yet if the speaker is forced to give reasons, they will almost invariably be found nothing more important than that he "mews."

Of the catbird, Nehrling says: "From early morning to sunset it watches over the fruit-trees, and kills the insects that would destroy them or their fruit. True, it takes its share, especially of cherries; but for every one it takes it eats thousands of insects. Where there are no small birds, there will be little fruit."

One of the most persistently slandered birds is the blue jay. Listen to the words of observers who do not speak from hearsay, but from positive first-hand knowledge "That swaggering fellow, the blue jay," says Praeger, "seems desirous of making a bad impression, but the fact is he is a great blusterer: it is only on rare occasions that he robs other birds'-nests, and the amount of fruit he consumes is trifling. His favorite food is acorns, beechnuts and chestnuts, varied with some waste corn and wheat. Grasshoppers, caterpillars, and beetles form one-fourth of his food. A pair of jays is certainly an acquisition to any orchard."

Says Professor Lane, "If we could learn the secret of a single winter's work done by a blue jay, of every grub and chrysalis torn from its hiding-place, of every hurtful seed destroyed, . . . we should not begrudge the busy worker the grain or the corn stolen from the grainery or bin."

Dr. Brewer says that a pair of jays feed their young five hundred thousand caterpillars in a season, also that one pair will destroy a million insect eggs each winter.

And, lastly, let me refer to the testimony of the Department of Agriculture, from the examination of the contents of nearly three hundred stomachs: "The accusations of eating eggs and young birds are certainly not sustained. . . . In fact, the examination of nearly three hundred stomachs shows that the blue jay certainly does far more good than harm."

Our beautiful Baltimore oriole has been accused of various ill deeds,—eating honey-bees, from which he has been completely exonerated, and lately of pecking grapes. But one farmer, who suffered from his fondness for this fruit, says that, in spite of that propensity, he is worth his weight in gold as an insect-destroyer. The bird is well known to eat great quantities of wire-worms and hairy caterpillars, that few birds will touch, and he has been amply proved to be of great value to us.

The dainty cedar waxwing is sometimes called cherry-bird, so named, it is supposed, because of his fondness for that fruit. It is admitted that the bird has the good taste to prefer a fruit diet; but, fortunately for us who share this liking of his, he chooses the wild fruits when he can get them. Also he devours immense numbers of canker-worms. In one case where an orchard was infested by these pests, a small flock of cedar-birds came to the rescue. A few were shot to make sure of what they were eating, and in the stomach were found, in most cases, about one hundred of the worms. At any rate, at a very moderate calculation, that one little flock was destroying many thousand worms every day.—"*The Bird our Brother*," *by Olive Thorne Miller.*

THE FRIENDLY STARS.

NOVEMBER: ALDEBARAN.

There are six brilliant stars that are distinctly of the winter, and they are in constellations that join each other and spread out in a splendid panorama across the southern skies. They are Aldebaran, Betelgeuse, Rigel, Pollux, Procyon, and Sirius.

Of these six stars Aldebaran is the first to appear. Along in September, a very little north of east, it shows its fiery face above the horizon. It glows with a rosy light that demands recognition, and at once pronounces it one of the most important of the heavenly bodies. Aldebaran lies at the lower end of a bright V-shaped cluster of stars known as the Hyades. The cluster is in the head of the great constellation Taurus, or the Bull, and the star itself marks the fiery eye of the enraged bull as he lowers his head for a lunge at Orion. Aldebaran shoots its ruddy face above the horizon just an hour after the hazy little dipper of the Pleiades has appeared, and the star is then to the east of, and hence almost directly under, the Pleiades.

Aldebaran shines in the evening skies for about eight months of the year. In January and February it is at its highest point early in the evening. At the same hours in April

it is conspicuous in the western sky, and by the end of May it has disappeared.

It requires something more than thirty-two years for the light of Aldebaran to reach the earth.—*"The Friendly Stars," by Martha Evans Martin.*

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

(Continued from last number.)

HUSBAND URGES HER TO BE "LITERARY."

Her husband encouraged her. He wrote, in 1843:—

"My dear, you must be a literary woman. It is so written in the book of fate. Make all your calculations accordingly. Get a good stock of health and brush up your mind. Write yourself fully and always Harriet Beecher Stowe, which is a name euphonious, flowing, and full of meaning. Then, my word for it, your husband will lift up his head in the gate, and all your children will rise up and call you blessed."

She replied, expressing grave doubts as to whether she could do it:—

"Our children are just coming to the age when everything depends on my efforts. They are delicate, nervous, and excitable, and need a mother's whole attention. Can I lawfully divide my attention by literary efforts?"

Professor Stowe wrote back:—

"God has written it in his Book that you must be a literary woman, and who are we that we should contend against God?"

A HAPPY MARRIAGE.

Years of poverty, illness, and bereavement followed, but Mrs. Stowe always expressed herself as happy in her husband and children. She wrote:—

"My husband has developed wonderfully as a housefather and nurse. You would laugh to see him in his spectacles gravely marching the little troop in their night-gowns up to bed, tagging after them, as he says, 'like an old hen after a flock of ducks.'"

Writing to an old friend, she said:—

"Indeed, my dear, I am a mere drudge, with few ideas beyond babies and housekeeping. Well, Georgy, this marriage is—yes, I will speak well of it, after all; for, when I can stop and think long enough to discriminate my head from my heels, I must say I think myself a fortunate woman both in husband and children. My children I would not change for all the ease, pleasure, and leisure I could have without them. . . . I wish you could see me with my flock all around me."

"NO WOMAN LIKE YOU."

Health or money might fail, but love never failed them. Professor Stowe wrote to his wife:—

"There is no woman like you in this wide world. Who else has so much talent with so little self-conceit; so much reputation with so little affectation; so much literature with so little nonsense; so much enterprise with so little extravagance; so much tongue with so little scold; so much sweetness with so little softness; so much of so many things and so little of so many other things?"

Mrs. Stowe wrote in reply,—

"If you were not already my dearly-loved husband, I should certainly fall in love with you!"

Mrs. Stowe early learned to like the colored people. She wrote:—

"If any one wants to see a black face look handsome, let them be left, as I have been, in feeble health, in oppressive weather, with a sick baby in arms, and two or three other little ones in the nursery, and not a servant in the whole house to do a single turn. Then, if they could see my good old Aunt Frankie coming, with her honest, bluff, black face, her long, strong arms, her chest as big and stout as a barrel, and her hilarious, hearty laugh, perfectly delighted to take one's washing, and do it at a fair price, they would appreciate the beauty of black people."

In 1850 they moved to Brunswick, Maine, Mrs. Stowe going in advance, with the children. She wrote to her husband:—

"There is no doubt in my mind that our expenses this year will come to two hundred dollars, if not three, beyond our salary. We shall be able to come through notwithstanding, but I don't want to feel obliged to work as hard every year as I have this. I can earn four hundred dollars a year by writing; but I don't want to feel that I must, when weary with teaching the children, and tending the baby, and buying provisions, and mending dresses, and darning stockings, sit down and write a piece for some paper."

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.

"Uncle Tom's Cabin," however, was not written as a pot-boiler. For years the wrong and the woe of slavery had been burning more and more deeply into her soul.

Many of the incidents in the story had come under her own knowledge. After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, her brother Edward's wife wrote to her, "Now, Hattie, if I could use a pen as you can, I would write something that would make this whole nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is!" Mrs. Stowe read the letter aloud to her family. When she reached those words, "rising from her chair, and crushing the letter in her hand, she exclaimed, with an expression on her face that stamped itself permanently on the minds of her children: "God helping me, I will write something. I will if I live." Domestic handicaps still delayed the effort, but she wrote to her sister-in-law:—

"As long as the baby sleeps with me nights, I can't do much at anything; but I will do it at last. I will write that thing if I live."

One Sunday, during the communion service, the whole scene of Uncle Tom's death came before her "like the unrolling of a picture scroll." That afternoon she locked herself in and wrote it down,—largely on brown paper in which groceries had been delivered. She read it to her children, and they all wept over it together. The rest of the story was written amid interruptions of every kind, and it came out as a serial in the *National Era* in 1851–52. Mr. Jewett, who had proposed to bring it out in book form, feared she was making it too long; but she told him she did not make the story, it made itself, and she could not stop it till it was done. Neither she nor her husband realized its power or foresaw its success. She was despondent as to whether anybody would heed her appeal. Professor Stowe expressed the hope that the proceeds of the book might be enough to buy her a silk dress.

The publisher offered her either 10 per cent. on all sales, or half profits and half risks. The business adviser of the Stowes—Philip Greeley, formerly Collector of the Port of Boston, and then a member of Congress—strongly advised them to take no risks.

"He reasoned that the subject was very unpopular, and that a book written by a woman could not be expected to have a large sale in any case. Dr. Stowe took the first copy of the first edition to the railroad station and put it into Mr. Greeley's hands just as he was leaving for Washington. Greeley was a sedate and self-contained man, a characteristically unemotional New Englander. Afterward he wrote to Professor Stowe that he began the book shortly after the train pulled out of the station, and that as he read he began to cry. He was humiliated. He had never before shed tears over a novel, still less over the work of a woman. Yet after he had begun it, he could not stop reading, nor could he keep the tears back. Consequently, on reaching Springfield, he left the train, and went to a hotel, took a room, and sat up till he finished the book in the early hours of the morning."

BECOMES A LIONESS.

Everybody knows what followed. The book sold by hundreds of thousands; it was translated into almost all languages; and everywhere it went straight to its readers' hearts. In practical effectiveness, as an actual power in the world, it surpassed any other romance ever written, before or since. When Mrs. Stowe went abroad, her journey was like a triumphal progress. Crowds everywhere came out to see her. She was made much of by the English nobility and by all manner of literary and famous folk; but "nothing pleased her so much as the sympathy and appreciation everywhere shown by the working people."

In Switzerland she was received with boundless enthusiasm. In an Alpine village the peasants cried: "Oh, Madame, do write another! Remember, our winter nights here are very long!" Surrounded by incense one hundredth part of which would have turned an ordinary head, she was not in the least puffed up—rather, gently amused. In the first flush of her celebrity she wrote to her husband:—

"It is not fame nor praise that contents me. I seem never to have needed love so much as now. I long to hear you say how much you love me."—*"Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe," by her son and grandson.*

ANECDOTE OF MARGARET FULLER.

This intercourse with the most unfortunate of her sex, and a desire to learn more of the causes of their degradation, and of the means of restoring them, led Margaret, immediately on reaching New York, to visit the various benevolent institutions, and especially the prisons on Blackwell's Island. And it was while walking among the beds of the lazar-house,—miscalled "hospital,"—which, then, to the disgrace of the city, was the cesspool of its social filth, that an incident occurred, as touching as it was surprising to herself. A woman was pointed out who bore a very bad character, as hardened, sulky, and impenetrable. She was in bad health, and rapidly failing. Margaret requested to be left alone with her, and to her question,

"Are you willing to die?" the woman answered, "Yes"; adding, with her usual bitterness, "not on religious grounds, though." "That is well—to understand yourself," was Margaret's rejoinder. She then began to talk with her about her health, and her few comforts, until the conversation deepened in interest. At length, as Margaret rose to go, she said, "Is there not anything I can do for you?" The woman replied, "I should be glad if you would pray with me."

WINTER BIRDS.

I watch them from the window,
While winds so keenly blow;
How merrily they twitter
And revel in the snow!
In brown and ruffled feathers
They dot the white around,
And not one moping comrade
Among the lot I've found.
Ah! may I be as cheerful
As yonder winter birds,
Through ills and petty crosses,
With no repining words
So, teaching me this lesson,
Away, away they go,
And leave their tiny footprints
In stars upon the snow.

—*George Cooper, in the Woman's Journal.*

FOR THANKSGIVING.

Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget thy Lord thy God.

Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;

And thou say in thine heart, My power and might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

Thy goodness, Lord, our souls confess;
Thy goodness we adore,—
A spring whose blessings never fail,
A sea without a shore.

Thy bounty every season crowns
With all the bliss it yields,
With joyful clusters loads the vines,
With strengthening grain the fields.

But chiefly thy compassion, Lord,
Is in thy gospel seen;
There like a sun thy mercy shines,
Without a cloud between.

—*Our Best Words.*

LIFE AN EDUCATION.

It has seemed to me that *education* is a much better word than "probation" to express the divine purpose concerning man in this present world. We are God's children here, and are being taught, trained, developed by what we are passing through. He has no occasion to put us to the test to see what we are worth: he knows that already, we may suppose. But the divine idea appears to be to bring out the good things that are in us, and so the world is made a place of discipline and development. Of course in this process a great deal is brought out that is not good, requiring correction through farther discipline; but the general outcome of human activities and experiences is a growth of faculty, a deepening sense of moral obligation, finer spiritual insight, an increasing love of goodness and of truth. Men are occasionally made worse, but on the whole they are made better by having to do with each other. We may look upon the world, then, as a school in which mankind receive a certain preparation for what succeeds. In every school there are some who cannot be taught much, some who will learn only iniquity: still, the processes of instruction go on, and those who will profit by them. In the great school of God there are courses of discipline and culture in infinite variety. Every person is led through experiences more or less peculiar to himself; but, whatever the lot or the task, the teachable soul draws from it some useful lesson, and comes out of it with some new nobility. Sorrow as well as joy, sickness as well as health, adversity as well as prosperity, yield their returns, when considered as means of discipline and development. Even mistakes and repented sins serve their purpose in this school, and man may make stepping-stones to heaven of faults surmounted, of hardships and afflictions patiently borne, of chastenings trustfully accepted as from a Father's hand.

Thus the truth is borne to us from all sides that what man gets out of life is education. We are here to derive from our experiences the best development of our own powers,—to walk uprightly that we may acquire uprightness, to do good that we may be good, to bear burdens that we may gain strength, to feel sorrow that we may obtain

the power of sympathy, and that softer, deeper tone of the spirit without which no one is made perfect.—*Newton M. Mann.*

In the darkest hour through which a human soul can pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain. If there be no God and no future state, yet even then it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be chaste than licentious, better to be true than false, better to be brave than to be a coward. *F. W. Robertson.*

What do we know of Deity? Just what we know of the sun before it has yet risen above the summit of the mountain. We see its glories painted in crimson and in gold upon the clouds that are above our horizon: we know it by its reflected light. So all we know of the Divine is the light of it that shines reflected from human souls.—*Felix Adler.*

He that hath so many causes of joy, and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness, who loses all these pleasures, and chooses to sit down upon his little handful of thorns. Enjoy the blessings of this day, if God sends them, and the evils of it bear patiently and sweetly; for this day is only ours, we are dead to yesterday, and we are not yet born to the morrow.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

Whether any particular day shall bring to you more of happiness or of suffering is largely beyond your power to determine. Whether each day of your life shall give happiness or suffering rests with yourself.—*George S. Merriam.*

No man or woman of the humblest sort can really be strong, gentle, pure, and good, without the world being better for it, without somebody being helped and comforted by the very existence of that goodness.—*Phillips Brooks.*

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

Thanksgiving Dinner.

We were at grandma's for our Thanksgiving dinner, and now you must guess what we had.

MENU.

Relish.

What Pistol claimed as his world, in native state. One woman's punishment, very thin.

Soup.

Fraudulent reptile. Noisy things.

Fish.

Milk's elevation, seen on expressage. A seaside product found in "Macbeth."

Pièce de Résistance.

Heard during the Armenian persecutions, with a twice-told tale and expanding. Adam's wife with her tempter's talk. Beaten and a kind of terminals not found on man. To appropriate. In the alphabet. What the American yacht does. Marmion's cry pluralized. Thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit, to pucker and a wager. Ancient salutes to royalty. Predicaments. What fanciers have done, a funny term for a goat.

Game.

To shrink. A suggestion to act together, youthful days.

Dessert.

What water is, the printer's bane. One-half of a sneeze and doing nothing. The lawyer's joy, a soft berth with not easy to take good-naturedly. A native of Europe, what do you do when hurt? Her finishing touches. Love's demonstration. A kind of shot and a letter. Found in history. Necessary to wheels. What Yankee farmers used to have. A complaint and remuneration.

—*Youth's Companion.*

Answers to puzzles in the October number.

I. Additions.—1. Ash—dash. 2. Ate—late. 3. Ale—vale. 4. End—mend. 5. Hair—chair.

II. Buried Cities.—1. Thebes. 2. Canton. 3. Saratoga. 4. Madras. 5. Concord.

III. Cross-word Enigma.—Hallowe'en.

IV. Square.—T O G O
O M I T
G I S T
O T T O

V. Stolen Letters.—1. Thomas Babington Macaulay. 2. William Penn. 3. Benjamin West.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of an instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

HEREAFTER, ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS, INTENDED FOR THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, "CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, 25 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS." THIS INCLUDES SUBSCRIPTIONS, CHANGES OF ADDRESS, REQUESTS FOR DISCONTINUANCE, BEGGING LETTERS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OR BRANCHES.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The regular monthly meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange will be held Friday, November 3, at 10.30 A.M. at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

The chairman is at the Alliance headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, every Monday and Thursday from 10 to 12 o'clock.

LIBRARY NOTICE.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

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THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

Please make checks payable to the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

Chairman, Miss Helen L. Bayley, 399 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.

Editor of "The Cheerful Letter," Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.